ABSTRACT

An attempt has been made in the present study to see and evaluate objectively the use of tenses in English by the undergraduates in Aurangabad. Use of tenses in any language is part and parcel of the acquisition process of that particular language. In view of this the present study could be looked as an attempt to see the process of acquisition of tenses in English by the students of B. Com First Year. Various theories and issues like the Contrastive Analysis, the Error Analysis, and the Critical Period Hypothesis, related with the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) have been reviewed in the present study. It has also been endeavored to study the influence of the learner’s First language habits on acquisition of the second language habits. The hypotheses set for the study were as follows:

1. Mother tongue influences the acquisition of a second language.
2. Students with English medium schooling also commit mistakes in using tenses in English.

3. There is no significant difference in the errors committed by the students with English or Marathi medium schooling.

4. The students tend to use tenses correctly in simple sentences but appear to be failing in tackling the complex ones.

A chapter in the present study has been entirely devoted for the comparative study of tenses in English and Marathi as the latter happened to be the mothertongue of almost all the students under survey. The thesis comprises 6 chapters in all.

Chapter 1 is introductory and it reviews details of the status of English in India during the pre and post – Independence periods. The chapter also gives period-wise details of English Language Teaching (ELT) in India. The aims and objectives, the Approaches and Methods of teaching English during both the periods have also been reviewed in this chapter.

Chapter 2 deals with various theories of Second Language Acquisition. William Littlewood’s Cognition oriented, Context Oriented categorization of SLA theories, and Krashen’s Models have also been reviewed in this chapter. The Communication and learning strategies
that the students adopt, the Critical Period, and the Contrastive Hypotheses have also been reviewed in this chapter. Various hypotheses set for the study have also been stated in this chapter.

Chapter 3 has entirely been devoted for review of the theory of Error Analysis and its application in the present study. The Design of the present Research has also been explained in this chapter.

Chapter 4 deals with the comparative study of the notion of Tenses in English and Marathi. The conventional approaches of the authorities in the field like Thomson Martinet, Wren and Martin, and the Modern grammarians like F.R. Palmer, Randolph Quirk, R.A. Close, Fredrick T Wood, Knud Schibsbye, and M. L. Tickoo et al have been reviewed here. The contributions of Marathi grammarians like Moro Keshav Damle, P. N. Dixit, Kelkar, have also been reviewed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 has entirely been devoted for the detailed analysis of the written responses of 120 students under survey, 100 of which were with the Marathi-medium-schooling background and 20 with English-medium-schooling background. A questionnaire comprising 6 questions, all related with the situational use of tenses in English, was specially prepared for the cause. The questionnaire carried 50 marks. The chapter carries
in detail the description and analysis of various types of errors that
the learners of a second language commit in their written
communication. A comment on the probable causes of errors and
an account of validation of hypotheses has also been given in this
chapter. All the hypotheses except the first one were found valid.

Chapter 6 deals with the findings, observations and conclusions
of the researcher. Some remedies to improve upon the situation
have also been explored and an effort has also been made in this
chapter to suggest some topics for further research.